

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH URGES RESIDENTS TO PREPARE FOR
SEVERE WEATHER**

(RICHMOND, Va.)—In light of recent predictions for severe weather this weekend, the Virginia Department of Health reminds residents to take steps now to avoid injury and illness caused by the storm. According to the National Weather Service, the intensity of Tropical Depression Ernesto is still uncertain. However, its path could be similar to Hurricane Isabel, which caused significant damage along the Virginia coast as well as to other areas of the state.

“Heavy rain and flooding is anticipated in the southwestern, southeastern and central areas of the state,” said State Health Commissioner Robert B. Stroube, M.D., M.P.H. “Simple precautions taken early on can keep families safe during the storm.”

Protect your family by stocking your home with supplies that may be needed during the storm. At a minimum, these supplies should include:

- Several clean containers for drinking water, large enough for a 3-5 day supply of water (about five gallons for each person).
- A 3-5 day supply of non-perishable food and a manual can opener.
- A first aid kit and manual.
- A battery-powered radio, flashlights and extra batteries.
- Sleeping bags or extra blankets.
- Water-purifying supplies, such as chlorine or iodine tablets or unscented, ordinary household chlorine bleach.
- Prescription medicines and special medical supplies.
- Baby food and/or prepared formula, diapers, and other baby supplies.
- Disposable cleaning cloths, such as “baby wipes,” or hand sanitizer for the whole family to use in case bathing facilities are not available.
- Personal hygiene supplies, such as soap, toothpaste, sanitary napkins, etc.
- An emergency kit for your car with food, flares, booster cables, maps, tools, a first aid kit, fire extinguisher, sleeping bags, etc.

For more information about how to protect yourself and your family before, during and after natural disasters, visit www.vdh.virginia.gov or the Virginia Department of Emergency Management’s Web site at www.vaemergency.com.